

Americans have a right to safe, gun-free classrooms, and this bill will help make that happen.

DISASTER ASSISTANCE FOR FARMERS

(Mr. POMEROY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, a preceding speaker noted the supplemental bill just passed. I want to speak about an aspect left out of this supplemental bill because of the actions of the majority.

Any assistance for farmers outside of the gulf region who suffered disaster losses in the 2005 production year were left out of the disaster bill. Supported by a bipartisan majority in the Senate, left out on a party-line vote in the House.

Our Nation's farmers have provided this majority and this President with plenty of help over the years, and they certainly deserve better than to have the President of the United States issue his first veto threat on a disaster bill that helped farmers when natural disasters took their crops.

They, instead, provided just for hurricane, farmers who lost during the hurricane. Well, look, maybe a drought does not have a name, maybe a flood does not have a name, but when you have a natural disaster and it wipes out our farmers, they deserve help from our government. That is how you keep family farmers in business, and it is a darn shame the Republicans stopped it in this bill.

STARK DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PARTIES IN APPROACH TO WAR ON TERROR

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, there is a stark difference in the way the Republicans and the Democrats approach this war on terror. There are many of the liberal elites who want to disengage and would like to leave broad swaths of this planet to terrorists. This course of action would lead to a lot of pain and suffering for future generations, for our children, for our grandchildren. It also would embolden the terrorists who are watching everything that we do and would lead to more strikes on U.S. soil.

After 9/11, our country made a decision that enough was enough and that it was time to fight back after two decades of terrorist strikes. It was time for us to protect our national security, and yes, indeed, because of our men and women in uniform, we have, and they are doing it brilliantly.

Is every day in this battle a victory? No. Is it easy? No. Is it very difficult? Incredibly so. But the important thing, it is a necessary fight and we are winning.

STUDENTS SHOULD CONSOLIDATE TO AVOID RATE INCREASES

(Ms. SOLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, graduation season is in full swing, and all across the country eager college students are walking across the stage and entering into the workforce. While many wonderful experiences no doubt lie before them, one factor will quickly dampen their spirits, the reality that they are now saddled with unmanageable debt they accrued while obtaining their college degree.

The debt will grow even more daunting if they miss an important deadline that is fast approaching. That is why I came to the floor today, Mr. Speaker, to encourage all college graduates and their parents who are carrying debt to consolidate their Federal college loans before July 1. If they do not, interest rates will rise by 7 percent for students and 7.8 percent for their parents. Consolidating this month will allow them to lock in a low rate of 4.75 percent, drastically reducing the overall amount they will have to pay.

Mr. Speaker, the Republicans refuse to join us in making college affordable for many, many young people. In fact, they actually made college more expensive for American students when they passed a \$12 billion in higher education cut earlier this year.

I urge strong support for our students and parents.

MAKING U.N. DUES ASSESSMENTS MORE FAIR

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, the assessment of member dues at the United Nations has always been something of a joke. Japan pays 19.5 percent of the U.N. budget and does not even get a chance to sit on the Security Council. By contrast, Security Council members Russia and China contribute only 1 percent and 2 percent respectively to the U.N.'s multibillion dollar budget. We pay over 22 percent.

Currently, the U.N. bases assessments on gross national income figures, the proper measure of which cannot be taken when currencies are not convertible. The United States recently proposed that assessments be calculated the World Bank way, using data on purchasing power parity, to better reflect what states can afford. This would raise Russia's share of the budget to about 2.5 percent, China's to 13.7 percent, leaving America's mostly unchanged.

Should they not want this recognition, under the new accounting method, China's share of world gross domestic product rises to second place from seventh, just as Russia's rises to 10th place from 16th?

GOP IS THE CUT-AND-RUN CONGRESS

(Mr. EMANUEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, Karl Rove has said that the Democrats want to cut and run on the war in Iraq. Well, let us talk about cutting and running.

When we were told this would be a quick war and turned into a long war, this Congress cut and run from its oversight responsibility.

When we were told 130,000 troops would be enough but more were clearly necessary, this Congress cut and run from doing its oversight responsibility.

When we were told this would be a conventional war and it turned into an insurgency, this Congress cut and run from its oversight responsibility.

When we were told oil would pay for reconstruction, but the taxpayers were left with a \$480 billion tab, this Congress cut and run from its oversight responsibility.

When we were told we would be greeted as liberators but had become treated like occupiers, this Congress cut and run from its oversight responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans want to portray the greatest foreign policy challenge of a generation as simply a choice between staying the course and cutting and running. Democrats look forward to this debate.

Mr. Speaker, oversight requires the vigilance and patriotic determination of every Member of Congress to do the job we were sent here to do and ask the questions that their constituents want.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for new priorities in Iraq and here at home.

BETTY BRADY'S RETIREMENT

(Mr. GINGREY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Betty Brady for nearly 30 years of service to the Powder Springs, Georgia community, most recently as the city clerk.

Betty's retiring from public service this year, and I know the whole city will miss her enthusiasm and her dedication.

Betty has worked with the City of Powder Springs since 1977, and in 1992, she was appointed city clerk. Over the past 14 years, Betty has worn many hats, accomplishing administrative, organizational and public relations duties for the mayor and city council.

As a native of Powder Springs, Betty brought a passion to her role as city clerk. Never one content to sit on the sidelines, Betty gave her time and energy to almost every aspect of city government.

In retirement, Betty will have more time to spend with her husband Aubrey, her three sons and her seven grandchildren.